



Tennessee Regulatory Authority

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A Portion of the (901) area to receive new Area Code.

7-Digit dialing will remain for most local telephone calls.

NASHVILLE – The Tennessee Regulatory Authority (TRA) voted today to adopt a “geographic split” as the method of providing relief to the counties served by the (901) area code.

Under this adopted plan, the counties located in the Memphis Metro Calling Area, which include Shelby, Fayette, and Tipton Counties, will retain use of the (901) area code, while the remaining counties will be assigned a new area code. This plan is consistent with the relief methods previously employed in Middle and East Tennessee.

Population, the number of telephone lines, and the number of business lines were factors in today’s decision.

“We took into account where the most people lived as determined by both residential and business telephone lines, and came to the conclusion that the most densely populated areas were those in the Memphis Metro Calling Area,” explains Eddie Roberson, Chief of the TRA’s Consumer Services Division.

Roberson further added that, as a result of this plan, fewer people would be negatively impacted by the introduction of a new area code, since a larger number of the (901) area residents live in the three Metro Calling Area counties.

7-Digit Local Dialing Remains

With the introduction of a geographic split, most 7-digit local dialing will remain and consumers’ dialing patterns will not change.

“The rule of thumb to remember is, whatever was considered a local call before remains a local call. And whatever was a long-distance call before, will remain long-distance,” clarifies Roberson.

The transitional dialing period for the new area code will begin no sooner than January 2001, with mandatory dialing of the new code not beginning before September of 2001.

“The transition period gives consumers and businesses alike the needed time in which to prepare for and to adjust to calling the new area code,” says Roberson. The telephone companies in West Tennessee will determine the exact conversion dates.

The entry of new telecommunications providers and the way telephone numbers are assigned by the North American Numbering Plan Administrator (NANPA) are the primary factors that contribute to area code exhaustion.

To address the problem of the state’s number resources, the TRA was recently given additional authority from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to implement number conservation measures. The additional power will permit the TRA to impose number pooling and audit a telephone company’s use of its numbering resources.

For more information

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